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Victoria Street Newz

February 2007

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Vol. 3 No. 9

freedom's just another word

What are warrior societies?

By Taiaiake Alfred and Lana Lowe

The history of indigenous peoples in the modern era is, fundamentally, a story of struggle to overcome the effects of colonization. And it is a story of the Canadian government's manipulation of vulnerabilities that have been created through the process of dispossession. The indigenous struggle has expressed itself in efforts to gain intellectual and cultural self-determination, economic self-sufficiency, spiritual freedom, health and healing, and recognition of political autonomy and rights to use and occupy un-surrendered lands. The re-emergence of warrior societies in the modern era is one element of a larger struggle of indigenous peoples to survive.

Contemporary warrior societies emerged in the late 1960s, with the rise of the Mohawk Warrior Society at Akwesasne and Kahnawake. The Mohawk Warrior Society was established by a group of young people committed to reviving traditional Kanien'kehaka teachings, language and structures in Kanien'kehaka territories. Accordingly, the strategy and tactics employed by the Mohawk Warrior Society are community and/or land based. The overall strategy was to repossess and protect Kanien'kehaka territories according to the Kaienerekoawa, the Great Law of Peace. The tactics employed by the Mohawk Warrior Society included barricades and roadblocks (to prevent Canadian and U.S. authorities from entering Kanien'kehaka territories), evictions (of unwanted people living in Kanien'kehaka reserve lands) and occupations (repossession of lands within Kanien'kehaka territory).

1970S: RED POWER ALLIANCES

The emergence of the Mohawk Warrior Society coincided with the emergence of what was termed the Red Power movement, an urban-based movement established in the United States to resist oppression and discrimination against indigenous people in all of North America. The overall strategy of the Red Power movement was to raise political, spiritual and cultural awareness among indigenous people and to advocate for what at the time were called "Indian rights." This political awareness was grounded in the philosophy and tactics of the American civil rights movement: sit-ins, rallies and marches to pressure the US and Canadian governments to treat indigenous people fairly and to honour treaties. It is worth noting that contrary to the Mohawk Warrior Society's strong roots in Kanien'kehaka cultural and spiritual traditions, the Red Power movement reflected the diverse racial and national backgrounds of its urban membership. It was grounded in a pan-indigenous culture and spirituality that was not reflective of a single nation exclusively.

There were other fundamental differences between warrior societies and the Red Power movement. Warrior societies emerged from within (and remain a part of) indigenous communities. Like the Mohawk Warrior Society, they are grounded in the indigenous traditions of their own communities, and are accountable to traditional leadership bodies. Red Power organizations emerged from within urban centres, were highly mobile and often formed a loose network of "chapters." They focused their activities in urban centres unless called upon by people in indigenous communities during times of crisis. Once in a community, a Red Power organization was held accountable to its hosts and adjusted its approach accordingly. Whatever the differences between them though, warrior societies and Red Power organizations did draw on the same spirit of discontent among young indigenous people and focused on the same fundamental problems; thus warrior societies and Red Power organizations naturally formed alliances in conflict situations.

Warrior societies and the Red Power movement expanded throughout the 1970s, often working together during episodes of crisis and mobilization. In 1973, the Mohawk Warrior Society stood in armed resistance against the Quebec Provincial Police at Kahnawake. The prominent Red Power organization, the American Indian Movement (AIM), formed an alliance with the Mohawk Warrior Society during this time. Later that year, AIM adopted the term "warrior society" for its promotional poster, A Red Man's International Warrior Society, and attributed its imagery and words to the Kahnawake Mohawk Warrior Society leader, Louis Hall (Karoniaktajeh). The text of the AIM poster is illustrative of the spirit of the times and of that movement: Pledged to fight White Man's injustice to Indians, his oppression, persecution, discrimination and malfeasance in the handling of Indian Affairs. No area in North America is too remote when trouble impends for Indians. AIM shall be there to help the Native People regain human rights and achieve restitutions and restorations.

The promotional poster produced by AIM in 1973 depicts a Mohawk man (indicated by the three upright feathers of the Rotinoshonni style Gustoweh, or headdress) standing atop inverted United States and Canadian flags. This imagery gained prominence in 1974, when the Mohawk Warrior Society re-established the territory of Ganienkeh after repossessing Kanien'kehaka lands that had been occupied privately in New York State.

photo: Ingmar Lee

Karoniaktajeh himself was instrumental in the repossession of Ganienkeh territory, and it was there that he unfurled the "Indian Flag," sometimes called the "Ganienkeh Flag." The flag symbolized a mighty Union of Indian Nations, depicting a generic indigenous man's head with long hair and one feather (symbolizing, according to Karoniaktajeh, indigenous peoples being "all of one mind"). Since Ganienkeh was envisioned as the staging ground for such a union, it was adopted there.

Later, Karoniaktajeh designed a flag for the Mohawk Warrior Society that depicted a Mohawk man's head on the same background of the "Indian Flag"— a sun on a red background. However the printer made a mistake and printed one feather instead of three! This flag has since been massproduced and can be found everywhere in the world (most recently it has been seen flying at the UN Conference on the Environment in South Africa) and has been adopted by many indigenous people in their defence of land and nationhood.

The Ojibway Warrior Society gained prominence in 1974 when they occupied Anicinabe Park in Ontario. This Society was similar in ideological orientation to the other movements that emerged during that era. The Ojibway Warrior Society appears to have been a unique combination of the

(continued on pg 2)

What are warrior societies? continued from pg 1

urban and "revolutionary" (in outlook and strategic objective) Red Power movement with the culturally and community rooted Mohawk Warrior Society. Tellingly, Louis Cameron, the Society's leader, commented that the name "warrior society" was only chosen because of its growing currency at the time and in response to pressure from outside of the movement to label itself – it is quite evident that the Ojibway Warrior Society did not stem from an ideological struggle. Rather, ideology and the label of a warrior society was grafted onto a movement that developed within the Ojibway community and in North western Ontario in response to systemic and immediate injustices against indigenous peoples. In this basic way, the Ojibway Warrior Society joined AIM and the Mohawk Warrior Society on the list of organic movements expressing long-standing grievances in a vocabulary that reflected both traditional culture and contemporary political discourse.

Later that same year, in the fall of 1974, the Bonaparte Indian Band in the interior region of British Columbia set up an armed roadblock on the highway that passed through their reserve to demand better housing. Louis Cameron and members of AIM led a Native People's Caravan to Parliament Hill in Ottawa, where they were met with barricades and riot police.

Through the 1970s and 1980s, the Kahnawake-based Mohawk Warrior Society expanded to the neighbouring community of Akwesasne and was instrumental in establishing a lucrative cigarette trade that generated revenue for both the Warrior Society and the traditional governments in the Kanien'kehaka communities. Meanwhile, AIM intensified its activities in British Columbia and Alberta, establishing chapters in major cities and attending the roadblocks, sit-ins and "fish-ins" that were springing up throughout western Canada and the United States.

to be continued in the March Street Newz --

OKA AND AFTERMATH

Taiaiake Alfred is Kanien'kehaka and a professor in the Indigenous Governance Programs at the University of Victoria. Lana Lowe is a member of the Fort Nelson Dene First Nation and works with indigenous peoples in Central America. This article is a condensed version of a background paper by the authors entitled "Warrior Societies in Indigenous Communities," prepared for the Ipperwash Inquiry and available on the commission's website and in its archive. This article was originally published at, and reprinted from newsocialist.org with Taiaiake's permission.

editor's note: front page photos show culturally modified trees - one standing, one among the driftwood at Willows Beach. The Suzuki Foundation states "Few Canadians know about the archaeological treasures that lie hidden in the old growth rainforests of coastal BC. Covered by moss and other vegetation, and sometimes difficult to reach in the dense forests, these treasures are the places where aboriginal people long ago felled and worked the massive cedar trees that were so critical to their way of life. Only in the last few decades have people become aware of the existence and importance of these ancient sites and the culturally modified trees found there."

Street Newz and Relative Newz News

by Janine Bandcroft

The Relative Newz website (relativenewz.ca) was born after the Street Newz site was hacked. While I was recreating the site, adding links to the archives, offering information about us, and setting up blogs for in-between newspaper writings, I also included podcasts of my 'Winds of Change' radio show at CFUV (101.9 fm, cfuv.uvic.ca), the Left Coast events lists, and small photo slide shows and short films I'd begun to experiment with.

I decided all this alternative media needed a name, something that would include Street Newz and all my other efforts. Thanks to Paul Burnside, 'Relative Newz' was born, and thanks to a recent fundraising campaign, it's thriving and growing.

Many people saw the fundraising plea on the GiveMeaning.com site and donated online, others donated to me directly. I'm happy to report that the good people at givemeaning.com are in fact good people. They promptly answered questions and concerns as I set up, maintained, and closed the fundraising page for relativenewz.ca. They make their money off banner ads, and didn't take any percentage of the money donated.

In total, I received $560 through the site and another $890 directly. The $560 cheque was deposited into the Street Newz account, and will be distributed by the board of directors slowly over time. All in all, this was a really wonderful response to my first annual fundraising effort!!

Your donations are very helpful to offset web and technology costs, and to keep me housed and fed. Here are some words of appreciation i received yesterday -- thank you for enabling me to do this work !!

Hello Janine, I just wanted to thank you for publicizing Monday evening's public forum on global warming, hosted by Gregor Robertson. We were all very encouraged by the amazing turnout we had - it was standing room only, people squeezing in and sitting on the floor, easily 150 people on a cold Monday night in January. On our sign in sheet, a number of people indicated that they heard about the event through Left Coast News list, so I wanted to let you know that we sure do appreciate you spreading the good word.

All the best, Maria Dobrinskaya, Constituency Assistant to Gregor Robertson, MLA Vancouver-Fairview, 104 - 1245 West Broadway, Vancouver, BC V6H 1G7 Tel: (604) 660 0270

Street Newz accepts Quality of Life Challenge Award !!

From Phil Lyons, co-chair, South Island Health Coalition

On December 19 at Fernwood's Cornerstone Café, the Victoria Street Newz paper and its hardworking Editor, Janine Bandcroft were proud recipients of a 2006 Quality of Life CHALLENGE award.

The speakers, including Sonya Chandler, Victoria City Councillor and Anne Russo, Quality of Life Challenge Working Group volunteer, gave heartfelt recognition to the community activities and support that the Newz and Janine have provided to the people and causes of the grass-roots community in Victoria. The presentation was made by the Quality of Life CHALLENGE Working Group.

The thirty or more attendees, from every walk of community life, were treated to some acoustic music from Mykla and some moving stories were presented from the personal experiences of many of the folks present. All in all, a well-received and enjoyed evening was had by all attending. Congratulations, Janine!

You can read the award story at: http://www.qolchallenge.ca/achievements/viewstory.php?id=43&viewType=awardOnly

editor's note: Those of the street newz team who weren't at the event wish to extend their gratitude to all who continue to read and support the newzpaper. Mykla, the musician, said he was especially overwhelmed with the generosity and the sense of belonging he experienced that night.

Dear Janine,

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you and your volunteers on Street Newz being the recipient of the 2006 Quality of Life Award, for co-operation.

This is a great honour and true testament to the accomplished work that goes into your publication every month. It is a significant recognition to the dedication and commitment that you and your volunteers continue to demonstrate. You should feel proud that this commitment has been identified by your peers and has been recognized in this way.

Again, please accept my congratulations on receiving this well deserved award.

In solidarity,

Rob Fleming, MLA
Victoria-Hillside
New Democrat Official Opposition

About Street Newz

"Building Bridges within our Downtown Community"

Coordinator & Website: Janine Bandcroft
Deliveries: Nancy Raycroft
Distribution: John @ Douglas/Fort St.

The Victoria Street Newz mission is to provide a voice, and income opportunities, for economically marginalized and/or socially disadvantaged people, at the same time offering employable skills training, increased self-esteem, confidence, and pride in accomplishments.

Victoria Street Newz is sold by licensed vendors who sign a code of conduct. They buy the newspaper for $.50 each, and resell them by donation. We like to encourage a sliding-scale economy which offers people a choice.

You can contribute to social change by supporting the Victoria Street Newz coalition and vendors, by reading information that informs you directly about poverty issues, and by taking action for progressive, peaceful, non-violent change.

Victoria Street Newz welcomes written submissions including interviews, event reviews, cartoons, poetry, photographs, or artwork, but we can't guarantee everything will be published. We reserve the right to edit, and will not print anything libelous, racist, sexist, or homophobic. Letters sent to the editor are assumed to be for publication, must include phone number or email (if possible, for confirmation) and may be edited for length. You can publish using a pseudonym, or anonymously.

Opinions expressed in this newzpaper are not necessarily those of Victoria Street Newz, the editors, advertisers, contributors, readers, or publishers.

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BC ENVIRONMENT 2006 - YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE

by Richard Boyce - islandbound.ca

2006 was a big year for environmental issues, both locally and provincially.

In April Environment Minister Barry Penner announced that his government would not proceed with plans to build a parking lot in Cathedral Grove. Logging along the sensitive Cameron River floodplain has not commenced, neither has the expansion of the park been publicly marked with new signs, and no legislation has been passed to formerly protect this sensitive ecosystem.

The logging of Hamilton Marsh has been put on hold while the RDN negotiates with Island TImberlands (owned by Brookfield formerly Brascan).

A Parksville Qualicum Water Conference entitled "Our Water, Our Future" looked at the local and global issues facing drinking water, a follow-up conference in 2007 will work towards solutions.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada is responsible for protecting riparian corridors, along the waterways of this region, in order to protect key fish habitat. Timberwest has logged to the banks of the Englishman River across from Morrison Creek and the Salmon Enhancement Canals. Island Timberlands Helicopters have logged the narrow steep banks of the Cameron Rivers, in an area know as Cathedral Canyon. Island Timberlands also plans to log the steep slopes directly above Englishman River Falls Provincial Park.

A private land owner built a house in Squitty Bay provincial park, on Lasqueti Island. After a public outcry Barry Penner, Minister of Environment responsible for BC Parks, gave notice to this squatter and allowed her 6 months to move out. Today the house remains as does the squatter. The BC Liberal government continues to move towards the privatization of BC Parks which will allow private operators to build and charge for services within publicly owned parks. Who will grant these rights and monitor that the parks remain accessible to the public?

East Creek, Carmanah Valley, and three watersheds in Clayoquot Sound are all that remains of the intact ancient rainforest on Vancouver Island. This year logging began in East Creek and the Clayoquot Sound watersheds, despite the fact that most people believe that these areas are protected by the BC government. Logging licenses on these publicly owned lands have been granted by the BC Ministry of Forests.

The Great Bear Rainforest deal was signed at the beginning of the year and was to protect the largest intact temperate rainforests in the world. A public relations campaign initiated by the BC Liberals has worked to win over BC voters and tourists alike as is evident by the 'artistically' painted Spirit Bears found all over Victoria and Vancouver. The reality is that the deal to preserve 1.8 million hectares of land along B.C.'s Central and North Coast is falling apart as Timber companies increase the rate of clear-cut logging to unprecedented levels.

More trees were cut down in 2006 than in any year in the past. Raw Log Exports have increased, the annual allowable cut has increased, and the number of forestry job has been cut dramatically. BC Ministry of Forests sells our trees at extremely low prices to logging companies. Low stumpage fees allow for the price of exported wood to be considerably lower than competitors south of the border. Ironically Timber companies continue to post massive profits. The soft-wood lumber agreement, being signed and negotiated by provincial and federal Forest Ministers, does not include raw logs. The closing of many saw mills through-out BC is directly related to the disagreement and has allowed for the increase in raw log exports.

Fish Farming expansions continue to be approved by the BC government despite evidence that escapees, sea lice, excess feed, and contaminants produced by these fish pens are causing the death of wild salmon stocks.

The abundant shellfish found on the beaches around Hartley Bay have been contaminated by diesel fuel that continues to leak from the sunken BC ferry Queen of the North, once again proving that disasters do happen in the coastal waters of BC. The lifting of a federal moratorium on off-shore oil explorations has been a priority for Premier Campbell's government who plan to have oil rigs and massive oil tankers navigating these same waters regularly.

The United Nations called for a ban on all dragnet fishing. Fisheries and Oceans Canada has thus far ignored this pleas to protect the ocean floors, despite scientific evidence that show that coral and other bottom dwelling organisms provide the basis for the existence of life in the ocean.

Premier Gordon Campbell's government has said no to wind and solar energy, instead pushing forward plans to build two massive coal burning furnaces and associated open pit mines. Despite the PR spin put on this issue, scientists conclude that coal burning furnaces to generate electrically is the single dirtiest (in terms of pollutants such as NOx, SOx, mercury, etc.) and highest generator of CO2 of any form of power generation.

You may have already had an impact on these issues, or you could help to change them in the future. Individuals do change the world. Let's make 2007 a HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Spaet/Skirt Mountain Update

Submitted by Carolyn Knight

I am the former Arts Programs Coordinator of Quadra Arts Centre, and also the former Artist in Residence at Blanshard Community Centre AIR Youth Arts. I grew up here in Victoria, living first on the Gorge, moved to Esquimalt on the border of View Royal and had my first experience of nature as sanctuary while playing in the woods and frog pond located on land next to and part of Songhees Reserve.

I received an message asking to take part in the protest "Stand for SPAET" on November 16, 2006. I loaded my pack, took a camera and headed up with Cheryl, David Dick (Songhees Nation member), Al Sam (Tsartlip Nation Council Representative) and one William Edwards, a non-Aboriginal supporter. Since that day, I have made myself available to support efforts to bring SPAET back from insane destruction.

The land is a mysterious presence, cannot and should not be destroyed as it is utterly connected and part of local First Nations peoples. Their culture is dying; stats support (as does VIHA's Strategic Plan) the fact that Aboriginal health is vastly below acceptable levels in terms of still births and age expectancies.

In my work experience in community arts settings, I have learned that it is important for individuals to have access to cultural material and practice. This holds true in this context for dignity and cultural access for First Nations peoples at SPAET. People are healthier when they are connected and engaged in community with access to food, water, housing and I would argue, cultural access. SPAET is food, water and nourishment for local First Nations.

Spaet Mountain is a desperate, terrible tragedy. Efforts to hear from various Ministers and the Premier have still not met with results. Researchers and scientists have been contacted in hopes that experts in water and aboriginal governance will join scientists from the international community (who have signed the petition and written letters to provincial authorities) as well as concerned residents directly effected by contamination of Florence Lake, and First Nations members working to turn the tide of destruction into protection of SPAET.

Certain contamination of SPAET stream and possible contamination of Goldstream River, and the impending traffic interchange set to destroy Garry Oak meadow habitat and SPAET Mountain canyon cultural sites, will spur authorities to act, it is hoped.

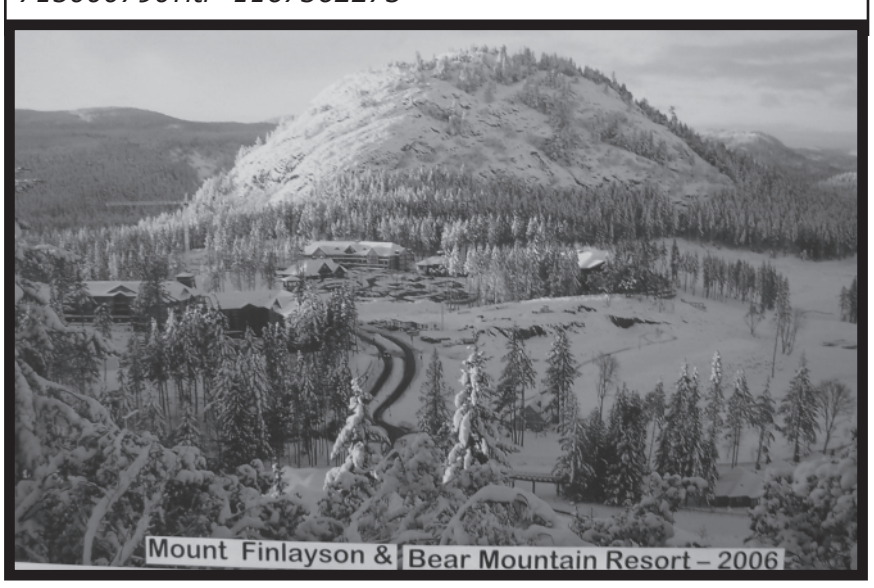
For more information:

Links to cave expert Paul Griffith's excellent website: *members.crcable.net/pumpkinpatch*

For a report on related components: *www.fpb.gov.bc.ca/special/reports/SR31/Protecting_Karst_in_Coastal_BC.pdf*

Dr. Karen Wonders, a Research Fellow with the Institute for the History of Science at the University of Göttingen, sponsors this site: *www.firstnations.de/06-1-coast-salish-1.htm*

Save SPAET petition: *www.thepetitionsite.com/takeaction/715000790?ltl=1167362273*



Continued Musings on the NATO Police Action in Afghanistan

Invasions, Wars, Trouble, Grief, and Strife

by Don Startin

In bringing you this series I have had the good fortune to immerse myself in the geography, history and culture of Afghanistan, and neglected to mention that the Afghans have a rich culture, and are very hospitable to strangers who are perceived to be friendly.

From 522-320 BCE [before the current era] most of what is now Afghanistan was part of the Persian Empire until Darius the Great lost it to Alexander. When Alexander's empire was divided among his generals, the western part stayed under Greek control but the eastern part came under an Indian ruler. For many hundreds of years thereafter the area was subject to the ebb and flow of various empires, and was overrun by nomadic tribes who migrated from central Asia. The area became important in the first two centuries of the Christian era because the silk route crossed it. Around the fifth century AD [or, after the current era] the area became converted to Buddhism - hence the statues of Buddha that the Taliban destroyed, and remained this way until the eighth century when almost all of it became Mohammedan. As mentioned in a previous edition the Mongols (moguls) were an Asian tribe that established a great empire in India, and China. It was in one time of stability that Marco Polo was able to get to China and back thanks to the peace imposed by the Great Kahn.

Between 1742 and 1747 a strongman called Ahmed Shah Durrani conquered most of what we not think of as Afghanistan from his base in Kandahar. Also, by 1809 Great Britain had become the main power in India. Thus Afghanistan became a key player on the NorthWest Frontier of India. So much so that the British signed a treaty of mutual defence with Afghanistan against Russia and France in 1809.

The 1800s saw the rise and fall of several royal dynasties and two wars with Britain, however Afghanistan could have been said to have made steady progress as by and large the wars, and raids on its borders, did not unduly impinge on the towns and countryside. In the late 1800s Afghanistan did not modernize its infrastructure as its rulers rightly feared political, cultural and economic interference from capitalist entrepreneurs. The early 1900s saw a modest 'liberalization' of some segments of Afghan society, especially in Kabul. Women began to go unveiled in public and in 1904 an upper crustian girls' school opened, the Malalai Lycée, which had French teachers. Malalai was an Afghan Joan of Arc who, with 25 other young women, rallied the Afghan army at the Battle of Maiwand. She was killed in the bitter fighting that saw 3,500 killed. Only 25 British soldiers survived.

Afghanistan stayed neutral in the first and second world wars but was adversely affected because much of her technical support came from Germany. During the Russian Revolution in 1918-1919 there were considerable troubles on the northern borders as Afghan sympathizers went to fight for their co-religionists against the Red Army, but this did not hold up the gradual improvement of life on the educational and medial fronts. The middle class began to get cars, and for the more comfortably off life in the 1950s looked quite rosy despite frequent political coups, and the lot of women became better.

Unfortunately, these coups became more and more bloody, and between 1973 and 1975 a series of complex events led to the Soviet Invasion. In March we will take a look at this invasion and its aftermath.

Personal note: If any of you TV watchers saw your humble Middle East correspondent at the Canadian Scottish Levée you were not mistaken. He was there under cover gathering material for April's article!

Remembering dru

From jessi junkin

On Tuesday December 12 one of our Food Not Bombers crew died in his sleep. Andrew (dru) Cavers was an enthusiastic volunteer with FNB & a super kind, positive dude who was loved and will be missed. Please send your prayers or positive loving thoughts to dru's family.

Below is the obituary that appeared in the paper:

CAVERS, Andrew (dru) James August 2, 1984 - December 12, 2006 With a smile on his face and great love for his family and friends, dru will be greatly missed. dru's pursuits to turn all frowns up side down will live on forever. Reminding all that life is here to be lived well, and to 'take it to the Max!' A funeral service will be held Monday, December 18, 2006 at 1pm at First Memorial Funeral Services, 4725 Falaise Drive. In lieu of flowers donations can be made to Food not Bombs c/o Shawn/ Duncan at 1038 Park Way Drive, Brentwood Bay, BC, V8M 1C8, or to Special Care Nursery at Victoria General Hospital, Victoria, BC in memory of Andrew.

From Beth Stupple

I just wanted to add an experience that i had at dru's memorial service reception... Jessi and i were hanging out by the cookies and heard the most beautyfull interaction;

Duncan (dru's dad) was talking to a group of at least 7ish people and someone asked about what food not bombs was anyways. Duncan proceeded to explain what we're all about to attentive folk who may not of otherwise ever heard or taken interest in FNB, but because it was important to dru, and dru is important to them; they now know all about it.

I just wanted to share cause it made me realize that even though andrew's not hanging around here anymore, his goodness is still touching a lot of folk, and through his death has come a lot of beauty; just like through his life. our community is totally lucky to have had him as a part.

From the Boondocks -- War .... What is it good for ?!???

By Ceritanne

What's with Canada, eh? As a nation, have we flipped our jolly trolley? We are at war! Sixty-two years after WWII, the war to end all wars, Canada is on the battlefield again. Ever wonder what for, as in why?

We've been told by Chief of Defense Staff General Rick Hillier that brave, patriotic Canadian soldiers are fighting so Afghan boys and girls can go to school and women can walk down the Afghan streets without wearing a tent. Is that reason to shoot and kill people? When was Canada invaded by Afghan hordes intent on murder & mayhem, providing justification for invading their country and killing them?

We've been told it was Osama bin Laden's Al-Quaida that attacked the United States justifying George Bush's war on Iraq…oops, wrong country. Americans do tend to be geographically challenged. In the meantime all the forensic evidence was hastily gathered up and moved off the New York Trade Towers site.

We've also been told by Rick…and who elected him…that Canadian soldiers are working in the reconstruction of Afghanistan and aiding in establishing a stable democratic government. Hmmm, something we barely have here at home. But why Rick, why? What's it to us? What have we become, America North, puffed up with the ideology of Manifest Destiny, we will show "them" The Great Glorious Way Forward into the Land of Democracy-ville"?

"I adore it. There's nothing I would rather do than be in the Canadian army," said Sgt. Abdul Guindo of Quebec City…he said it's time Canadians get over their obsession with peacekeeping and accept that Canadian troops are now at war. (1)

A soldier "adores" killing people. This is normal human behaviour? Being "obsessed" with peace keeping is abnormal? There's just nothing more heart warming than being admonished by a trained killer, whose wages we're paying incidentally, telling us we're psychological misfits because we'd rather be peace keepers!

"I haven't had a single kill that has bothered me and there's been a lot of them. None of them have bothered me at all," reflected one private, who cannot be identified because of a ban by the Canadian military. "You sit and wonder if it should and you wonder why it doesn't bother you; I mean to see bodies explode or to see them chopped into little pieces by a machine gun and know that you did it," he added.

"The Taliban are doing things I don't agree with. My country says it's all right for me to do it, my God says it's all right for me to do it. They're doing things he doesn't agree with too, so it makes it easy to do it," he concluded. (2)

This Canadian solider, if he's not killed, will be coming back home to Canada and wonders if he "will ever be the same again" after killing "Taliban" (as if humans equate to rat status). One can only wonder at his value system since he is not even "bothered" about taking another human life.

Obviously he considers himself a Christian when he refers to "my God says it's all right for me to do it." Just who or what is his "god?" The man seems somewhat confused. Supposedly Christianity is all about love, brotherhood, "do unto others as you would have done to you" and "thou shalt not kill." So the Afghans do things his "god" "doesn't agree with." Good grief, if people killed other people because of not agreeing with them, the parliament buildings in every country would be in a constant state of blood bath.

And, what a confusing circumstance for the wives of these soldiers who are home in Canada raising the next generation of warriors. "Now Johnny, don't fight with your brother over the GI Joe. Jesus was a man of peace. Be a good little Christian." Whaaaaa.

So, is this the reason why Canada, as a country, is engaged in killing Afghans because "we" are Christians and don't agree with "them," the Afghan Muslims? Is this another Holy War? Is this a modern day Crusade?

Next is the quote from Canadian Expeditionary Force Command, Lt.-Gen. Mike Gauthier. "The mission here is about rebuilding a nation," Gauthier said. (3)

Why are the Canadian armed forces "rebuilding" the nation of Afghanistan? Why not Darfur? Why not any other war-ravaged nation? What is the reason behind "rebuilding" Afghanistan? Could it be because Afghanistan is a pipeline for oil?

Rather than continue on knee-deep in media backed war propaganda and placing yellow ribbons on their SUVs (there's a clue), the people of Canada should be asking these questions rather than swallowing the hearts and flowers "what it means to be a soldier" and "Christmas in Afghanistan" tripe designed to boost feelings of patriotism and pride in men who "adore" taking another persons life.

(1) cnews.canoe.ca/CNEWS/World/2006/12/25/2986222-cp.html
(2) cnews.canoe.ca/CNEWS/War_Terror/2006/12/23/pf-2951157.html
(3) cnews.canoe.ca/CNEWS/World/2006/12/25/2986222-cp.html

A DISABLED YEAR SPENT IN THE FASCIST'S MACHINE

Submitted by: Ashamed to Be Anonymous

Dear Brothers and Sisters

After phone chatting with a wonderful staff lady from "Street Newz" and recounting my victimization at the hands of the B.C. Ministry of Social Services, I was invited to make this submission. It is for the benefit and edification of three (3) distinct groups of readers (although everyone is welcomed to read it): those who have already gone through the application process for disability benefits, those who will in the future and those who are professionally or socially concerned about the severe injustices entrenched in this hideous process and may be in a position to help change it for the better.

First a brief personal history. I am in my early fifties and have been receiving D2 since 1998. Before that I received non-employable assistance since 1989 and before that employable assistance since 1986. I joined the Royal Canadian Navy in 1979, gave my oath to Queen and Country (a blood oath that I meant to the death) and have never regretted it since. You see my military service brought me out to this beautiful and MAGICAL land when I chose to be posted to an unpronounceable place on the map called Esquimalt. Little did I know that it would be a place that would forge this boy into a man and change my life forever. As for the twenty (20) years that I have been "under the foot" of the B.C. government that experience has forged the man into something that disturbs my soul and has diminished my sense of personal freedom and dignity.

From 1979 till 1984 I served with distinction in the Queen's Navy as a heavy weapons specialist (gunner), marine tactical response team rifle man (boarding party/s.w.a.t.) and demolitions/ ammunition specialist. As you can imagine my job was quite stressful and challenging. I averaged 250 days a year at sea and since I was in a combat trade, practical as well as school training was constant and rigorous. For those of you who do not know, the "enemy" back then was the Soviet Union and little did the public know of the CLASSIFIED incidents and encounters that Canadian Naval Combat Units had with Soviet Naval and Air Forces that were never reported in the press. Most of these incidents took place west of Alaska near the Aleutian Islands. To finish off here let me also mention that I served time in a Canadian military prison for a crime that I did not commit and after being released STILL chose to go back to my combat unit and serve obediently.

The point I wish to illustrate here is that I am a Calgary, Alberta boy who was raised by decent lower middle-class parents who instilled in me a respect and reverence for our society and the political/judicial system that administers it. In that respect, if my parents were alive today they would not recognize their own son.

Back to my issues with the S.S. (how apt!). I discharged from the Navy in the summer of 1984 and spent the next two years in a state of cognitive disorientation (later to be diagnosed as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder). I paid the rent till '86 using up my military bulk pension payment. It was shortly thereafter that I decided to "sleep in bed" for the first time with the Ministry of Human Resources. You may find it interesting (or amusing) that the first and last time that I ever had an actual home visit from someone who actually went to university and earned a degree in Social Work was in that year and what an experience that was.

In 1988 I was accused of a serious crime and investigated by biased and incompetent police officials who remembered me from my navy days and had formed a grudge against me back then because I would run my mouth like any drunken sailor in public would. I believe the officers made up their mind concerning my guilt before they started their investigation as a form of revenge and acted accordingly. The psychological abuse I suffered at their hands was overwhelming and immensely stressful to my body. Three days after my first encounter with them at my front door the first symptom of my disease manifested on my left knee and I have suffered the wrath of severe Psoriasis and Arthritic Inflammation ever since. That's right folks, I can actually trace the specific root cause of my disability right back to its point of origin. But know this: with all the agony, suffering and lost opportunities (not to mention the financial poverty) I have endured these past eighteen (18) years, I would not change a single moment of my past if this miracle were granted me. All of my life experiences have shaped and defined me into the man I am today. And as well as my shortcomings I have many strengths, talents and some hard-earned wisdom that I can call my own. Believe me those Constables will answer for their sins through the Karma of life. I WAS NEVER CHARGED.

Back to the present. In 2005 the cheque dispensers sent me a letter informing me that I had a choice, apply for Federal C.P.P. disability benefits and continue drawing a cheque from the province or: refuse to comply and be disqualified from any further assistance. After reading this "edict" my body's adrenaline and cortisol levels went ballistic. The reason that I became so stressed out was my anticipation of having to go through the WHOLE F&*%ing APPLICATION PROCESS ALL OVER AGAIN!!!!!!!! When you have an auto-immune-based disease as I do you can "APPEAR" to be healthy one day and be totally immobilized and in excruciating pain the next. Real issues of credibility arise with the medical specialists when you are examined by them and they see little if any symptoms of inflammation on or in your body.

Unless they know you and your medical history intimately over the past several years, they adopt "the look" on their professional face that says: I think you are trying to defraud me Mr. Smith. My family doctor is a wonderful, kind and decent human being who knows me and my medical challenges well. However, the government bureaucracy puts all their emphasis and faith in specialists who do not know you or see you no more that once or twice a year!

By the grace of my Gods and Goddesses (I am a pagan and spiritualist) I managed to randomly select a Rheumatologist and Dermatologist that were fair, unbiased towards the poor and accurately diagnosed my condition along with a prognosis for my chances of being able to be meaningfully employed. THE GREAT IRONY HERE IS THAT I BECAME SO STRESSED OUT THROUGH THIS TWELVE MONTH PROCESS THAT MY CONDITION WORSENED TO THE POINT THAT NO ONE COULD DISPUTE MY OBVIOUS AFFLICTION! How f$#@ed up can this crazy life on assistance be when you are actually RELIEVED to be seriously ill!

Well kids the twelve months went by (so very slowly) and THE LETTER arrived in my box. "Dear Mr. Smith, we are pleased to inform you that after a medical adjudication of your application and documentation you have been APPROVED for C.P.P. disability benefits. The letter went on to list the amount of my monthly benefits before and after the cost of living increase was factored in. About $572.00. The balance of my original monthly cheque would be made up by the province.

Now here is where it gets weird and insulting; the letter also shows a box entitled RETROACTIVE BENEFITS that was back-dated to the beginning of the application process (about 12 months). In this box is an amount totaling $10,750.00 that I am also entitled to. Well I almost fell on my face! Ten Grand! Yahoo! A mini lottery winning for all my suffering. I was starting to feel pretty patriotic right about then. Hell I thought; I might even vote for Harper just as a way of saying "Gee I guess you're not the fascist I always thought you were, no hard feelings hey?"

And then I read on further and read that this retroactive amount will be DEPOSITED DIRECTLY WITH THE PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA, SOCIAL SERVICES. My brothers and sisters, how cruel is it to "dangle" a carrot in front of a starving man only to snatch it away when he thinks he might have a chance of tasting it? Those Goons! Now if you think that is cruel and unusual punishment then read on. On top of denying me My retroactive entitlement, the Federal Government is going to TAX ME FOR IT!

The next thing I did was phone Social Service's ENFORCEMENT COMPLIANCE PREVENTION DIVISION (these are the guys who investigate welfare fraud and generally instill fear among the recipients). Okay let's call them what they are; "Welfare Gestapo." After hearing my story, the man that I spoke with said (and I quote); "Since you did not apply for C.P.P. disability back in 1998, you owe the province for all the years that we have had to pay your disability rate. Therefore we are claiming your retroactive entitlement as repayment for those years."

These guys are reeeeeeeeal slick. He almost had me THANKING him for taking my money away from me. When I enquired about paying taxes on this elusive ten grand he said (and I quote); "Oh yes indeed this amount WILL SHOW UP ON YOUR T5 SLIP that we mail you at tax time and you will have to claim it as income. If you have ANY ISSUES with this 'arrangement' then it is up to you to CONTACT REVENUE CANADA ON YOUR OWN and discuss the matter with them." Brothers and sisters, right about this time I was looking out my kitchen window to make sure that I was in Canada circa 2006 and not living in some Twilight Zone Orwellian episode circa 1984!

And that is where I am today. Mom and Dad (both gone now) raised me to respect authority and behave in a civilized manner. They also taught me to know when I am being "hustled" and "conned." That is exactly what I feel like when dealing with my own government. I absolutely believe without a doubt that because of my socio-economic status in this province the corporate-evolved politicians and bureaucrats (who are their lap dogs) believe they have the right and power to manage me according to the darkest aspects of their ideology and perverted value system. NOW I HAVE AN INKLING OF WHAT APARTHEID MUST HAVE BEEN LIKE FOR BLACKS AND OTHER NON-WHITES IN SOUTH AFRICA. In this province I AM A SECOND-CLASS CITIZEN.

I suppose I should be thankful for that because if I was reduced to living on the streets then I would be a THIRD-CLASS CITIZEN. Isn't Democracy a wonderful thing? I am so glad that I have made the supreme effort to go out and vote at every election for the past 35 years!

In closing, I am a warrior, certified seniors' health nurse and social advocate for seniors in my community. I do not back down from anything or anyone. If I believe that right and truth are on my side I will fight to the death. I do not fear dying. But the truth is I NOW FEAR THE HAND THAT FEEDS ME ON THE LAST WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH. They are good at doing that to decent people who thought they were free, who thought they were the authors of their own lives.

And that is my story.

editor's note- the word "fascism" is defined in the OED as: "the principles and organization of the extreme right wing nationalist movement, prevailing in Italy under Mussolini (1922-43). Also, any similar nationalist and authoritarian movement; any system of extreme right-wing or authoritarian views."

if you have a story to share, please send it to streetnewz@islandnet.com or give it to one of the street newz vendors to pass along. we're happy to publish anonymously, to protect the innocent.

What Would Jesus Do?

Dear Jesus,

I know you're dead and can't read this, it is more of an artsy thing inspired by a desire to say the truth you wanted to say.

I love you very much and am sorry you had to go through all that shit... what a freakin' adventure, oh my gosh. You did well... that is to say, you are remembered fondly by many people... you have also become a target of Satan's... your name is besmeached on a very common degree, everyday, everywhere. I know. I know. They 'know not what they do'.

We're coming to a global catalyst point now, in our 'ignorance' destroying the very air we breathe and attempting to enslave all life and retard it so it may never know freedom. We make it through, I know this- the 'truth sets us free' thing is true. More and more people are coming to terms with the giant delusion that has been put on us and are venturing into truths that attract persecution, so people are enjoying much adventure.

I know you were just a guy that knew what he was and you told the people what they were and many did not want to believe you because they would attract the persecution of their master, the devil.

May all the people know that there is a truth above all, and that it is simple in its grandness. Love is THE truth- you will kill me or be my friend, after that, if I am still alive I will suggest consideration of fate, because understanding that will lead to fearlessness in thought and that leads to wisdom and true liberation for all.

The 'now' remains perfect. There will be a moment in this next year (September) that Babylon will be stuck with revealing itself as it will be required to make a ruling on whether or not it is legal to sleep outside. A part of me really wants the judge to say it is illegal to sleep outside because it is quite liberating ignoring the order of a tyrant.

peace, patience be with us all. Merry Christmas, I know... holy f, they are so proud of someone who said be not proud... oh well, you are loved by many.

love, david
www.angelfire.com/apes/hatrackman

2007 New Year's Day Poor Peoples' Levée Tour

by Rose Henry

This year was another successful year for the poor peoples' annual levee tour. We managed to get to three levees which is down considerable from the past few years due to the changing in scheduling of each municipality's levee.

This year Art Farquharson and I were met by over fifty people at Victoria's city hall at 9 am on January first. Up until our arrival we were wondering if we were even going to have twenty-five people which is the maximum that our rented bus would allow. As it turned out there were a few people who brought cars so we created an instant caravan of poor people who travelled from city hall around 9:30ish with banners dangling from the side of the bus and 25 very happy people heading of to our first levee at government house where we indulged ourselves with short bread cookies, tarts, coffee, tea, punch and fruit cake. This was a step up from previous years. In previous years it was minus the tarts and fruit cake. Of course Iona was gracious as she always is. It was to bad that she saved her speech until after we left.

Rose Henry speaks with Oak Bay Councillor Nils Jensen, a regular Street Newz reader.

After departing government house with more then our filling of goodies, and singing our anthem, we went to Oak Bay where we were greeted with some apprehension from their city council. To me the highlight of this gathering was when the Ragging Grannies joined did a sing-along with us. The food served here was actually an improvement from last year as well as the venue selected too. There was all sorts of pastries, sandwiches and beverages available for everyone. I think some of the organizers might have been paying attention to our rating of the quality of food being served on this day because it looked like some consideration had gone in to the natural value of the food being served too. I can't remember if the mayor was actually there or not, but I do remember that there was a couple of council members who expressed that they had been dealing with the homeless community in Oak Bay. When I asked how they where dealing with it they said that the issue was on their agenda at some point and that they had been supporting Victoria's city council by sending money over to help cover the cost of housing the homeless. So in other words pass the buck and the problem will be dealt with.

Victoria's Raging Grannies join he poor peoples' song circle

The third levee that we attended was Langford where once again, for the second year in a row, the mayor was a no show for greeting us. But they did have the best food and beverages. They had things like real meatballs, cheeses, pastries, veggies and of course goody bags for our tour that consisted of a healthy lunch box and gift bags for the first twenty-five people.

When it came to answering the question about Langford's solutions for housing the homeless two city councillors were quick to respond by pointing out their city plan display and informing me that they have a development agreement that for every ten houses built that the eleventh one will be sold for only $165,000 on certain conditions. My mind kinda went numb as I began to wonder who amongst the homeless or working poor community would be able to afford one of these homes.

Langford Councillor Matt Sahlstrom, Madison, and Jeremy

For those not able to attend Richard Boyce videotaped the tour and placed it on my blog sight at homelessnation.org.

Thank yous and acknowledgements to the Carmanah Forestry Society for providing us with the bus, the COPE local 378 union for supporting us, and Chris Doyle for driving the bus along with the people who provided cars for the caravan. Acknowledgments go out to The Solstice Cafe for donating coffee, Wildfire bakery for donating bread, Galey Farms for the eggs, and Rising Star for providing muffins, and to Cheryl and Art for ensuring that there were enough sandwiches for everyone. All the food and coffee was for a back up just in case the levees were like the ones in the past few years were the quality of food was something else. Leftovers were passed on to the people who did not make the tour.

editor's note: there's also short film and write up of the levee tour at relativenewz.ca.

Of Mice and Woman

by cyann ray

Happy New Year. I realize that I am a month late but I missed January's submissions deadline due to some very uninvited housemates. Back on November 26 when our temperate little town took on a ton of snow, an extended family of mice found shelter in my humble abode. Besides the obvious annoyance of wee critters scratching and gnawing their way through my walls and cupboards, I have been cleaning up after these vermin on a daily basis and the task remains seemingly endless.

December was used up trying to salvage over 30 years of photographs. I had to sort thru over 400 lbs of photo albums stored in milkcrates as there was rodent feces (and I'm assuming, urine) indiscriminately sprinkled throughout the crates and between most pages. It was a daunting task. While a visual trip down memory lane during the holiday season may sound potentially reminiscent and heartwarming, I instead experienced a disturbing sadness as one old photo after another had to be tossed away. Rather than filling my days with holiday baking and those chilly nights making crafts and cards for gift giving, I cleaned and sorted and took armloads of albums out to the trash.

The mice didn't stop there. The relentless little creatures ventured thru chests of drawers leaving "deposits" in every fold. With only one washer/dryer unit for 7 suites, much of December was spent trying to get a dozen loads of laundry done. Stacks of linen and bedding, teatowels and winter scarves (not to mention all my clothes) all folded neatly and seemingly clean, had to be washed, dried and packed up in plastic bags so as not to get peed on again.

You see, although the holiday is over, they are still living with me. The cleaning is endless because the critters are still using my home as a toilet. Every night I wipe my kitchen counter down with bleach and every morning there is a wee turd awaiting my disdain.

Of course I have told my property manager, but he once owned a place in Puerto Rico where the rats were the size of small dogs. I'm not getting much sympathy or even concern from him. I was, however, given 8 'sticky pad' type traps and within 12 hours caught 5 mice. I have asked for more traps but I'm still waiting. I broke down recently and invested some of my xmas money on traps. So far I have caught 16 mice. They all died a slow and tortuous death. Sorry..... should have stayed outside. My suite is a mere 400 sq. ft. and if I could set out 50 traps I'm sure this would solve the problem quickly. It's a lot easier to deal with captured rodents than deal with their piss and shit all over my home.

So Christmas came and I somehow managed to bake up my traditional shortbread and gingerbread cookies for my family and a few special souls but I was unable to complete several needlepoint projects. I am blaming this on the mice. Understandably my sleep was greatly disturbed when the vermin moved in. Having to listen to the mice just several feet from my pillow was quite unsettling and having to spend my days cleaning up after them didn't help either. This lack of sleep, along with the stress of it all worsened my fibromyalgia. My hands have been crippled with pain now for nearly two months. I couldn't finish my xmas needlepoints and I couldn't write an article for STREET NEWZ last month.

My family tells me to move, like it's a simple, viable solution. Anyone recalling my anti-bank article in STREET NEWZ last year ("Cash Only Please".....) will know that 22 prospective landlords turned me away because I didn't use banks. Well...I still don't have a bank account, and with limited funds and no vehicle, I don't see moving as an option. Besides....I love my flat. Great location. Fireplace. Bay window full of sunshine. Affordable. Pot and dog friendly. Decent neighbours. And according to a Monday Magazine feature story several years ago, rats (and I figure, mice) live EVERYWHERE in the CRD. It's not because I live in a dump owned by a slumlord that I have mice. And it's not because I have pizza boxes and toast crumbs littering my home either. All my food is sealed in glass or tin and I assure you my place is SUPER clean! Oddly enough I am the only tenant who has complained and bothered to set up traps.

It's a New Year now and I know there is no benefit in becoming depressed or overwhelmed. What can I do?? I'll get more traps and I'll keep cleaning. I guess I'll end up systematically downsizing as I search for droppings, edit my stuff and repack into storage bins. My place will be easier to clean if it is practically empty. And less clutter will allow more space for traps. I am trying to give this on-going experience a positive spin. Look how much I've purged myself from the items that entrap me! Look how I have become cleansed! It's all been so therapeutically cathartic!!

Ya right. At least I don't have spiders!

(Any helpful suggestions my readers may have are greatly appreciated - [streetnewz@islandnet.com will pass them along]).

Readers - Red Again !!

What I write is my own opinions.

Now that we have first started a new year, I thought that maybe, I took the time, with your help, to help me in my source of my being.

First of all, I don't know everybody but I don't really mind but I meet so many people that sometimes I forget what I am all about. But yet, I still feel as if I belong.

I know people look and act different when they meet me. But I must admit, I'm just as scared as they are. But, one thing I have come to realize is that people from all walks of this world have their own ways of looking at life.

I am not the smartest, strongest, or weakest person on this place we call the planet Earth. So I would just like to say HAPPY NEW YEAR !!

GROWING GAP BETWEEN RICH AND POOR

From Gerry Masuda

Statistics Canada (StatsCan) has analyzed the net wealth of Canadian families between 1999 and 2005, during one of the strongest economic booms in recent years.

The StatsCan analysis shows that the gap between the rich and poor is increasing. Whereas the average Canadian family's new wealth increased by 41.7%, the poorest families net worth decreased by 70%.

The problem is reflected in the news headline *Ontario's poor given a 25 cent raise*. Ontario MPPs just gave themselves 25% raises, but the lowest paid workers in the province will have to settle for a 25-cent-an-hour hike to the minimum wage.

It is evident that the gap will continue to grow unless some fundamental changes are made. The poor have the numbers to make political difference. They must self-organize for political activism.

One method to reduce the 70% decease in the poorest family net worth could be a guaranteed livable income. This growing gap is an urgent problem to address since it could lead to social instability.

What other ways can you think of to help reverse this continuing increase in the growing gap between the rich and poor in Victoria? Send your ideas to gmasuda@telus.net.

New Group Forming-- Anti-Poverty Electors

From Robert Arnold

I'm sick of poverty! I'm sick of seeing it, hearing about it, talking about it and being angry about it. After 40 years of fighting poverty as an advocate and as an activist, who has seen governments do nothing good about the issue, I finally think it is time to do something new. I am starting up the Anti-Poverty Electors, a nonpartisan voting block for poor people and our allies.

One fifth of the population of British Columbia is poor. That is one million people. Because some of them are too young to vote, I figured there are 750,000 poor people in the province who could vote as a block. Add to that number the other five to ten percent of the population, who care about poverty because they know someone, who is poor or because they believe in justice and equality, and it becomes enough to make a big difference.

You might ask why we don't just form our own party and govern ourselves. I believe that would lead to being the same as the other parties. We would depend on the same sources to fund our campaigns and would end up owing the same people, and being unable to pass the legislation we need to pass. That is how the political parties have become so similar and so powerless. They are addicted to money.

Anyone who wants to play politics like that would be better advised to join one of the parties that already exist. We are taking a new and more powerful approach by being a voting block. We can deal with issues like poverty, the environment and health care. The political parties cannot.

Most elections in B.C. constituencies are won by pretty narrow margins. The winner gets something like forty nine percent and the loser forty three percent. Anti-Poverty Electors can add its votes to either side and it will win. Furthermore, it really doesn't matter which side wins in any constituency; or which party governs after the elections, as long as they know that we have given them the victory.

We will, in fact, own the members who sit in the Legislature. They will do what we say about our issues or we'll fire them by using recall a year and a half into their term. We can fire a few of them to show the others they better obey us; or the whole lot and have another general election. We really have that power. All we have to do is organize and vote as a block.

Anti-Poverty Electors hopes to hold public meetings in constituencies on the Lower Island in February and March. At these meetings constituency chapters of Anti-Poverty Electors will be created. We will start by explaining the whole idea and answering any questions anyone has about it. We will talk about the kinds of things we will demand of the government once we elect it. We will elect an executive for the constituency chapter and create committees to do the work.

Right now we are forming the Provincial Steering Committee. Our job will be to create the written materials and set up structures that will assist in creating the Anti-Poverty Electors. We need to do some fundraising and finalize a vision piece and media materials for the organization. We will be registering the organization as a non-profit society soon as well. There is lots of work to do.

If you would like to help in some way, please contact me at 595-6871 or by email at greyknight@shaw.ca.

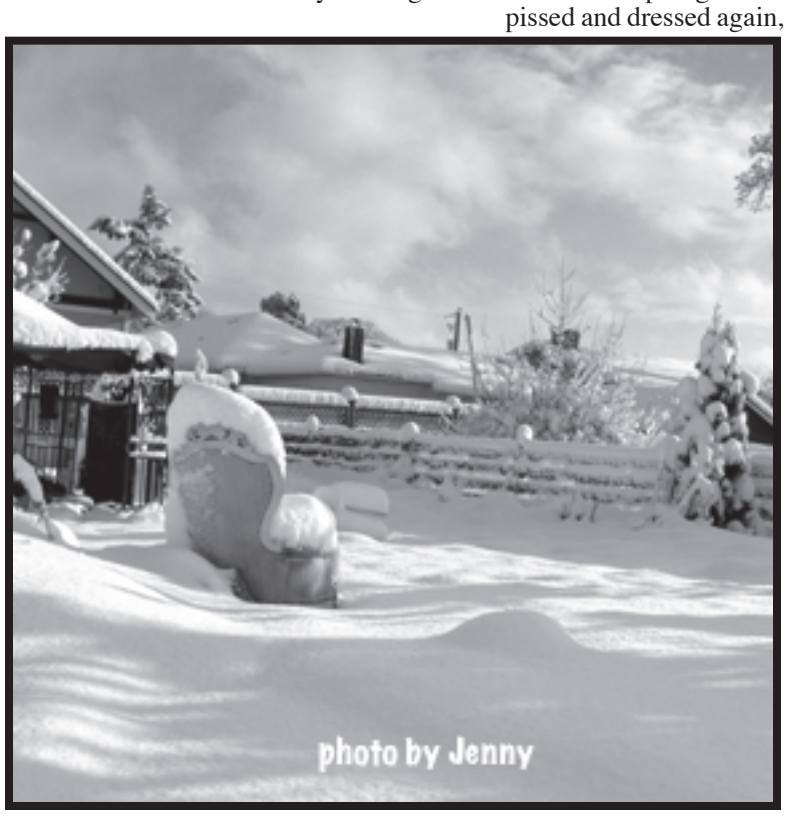
Comic Relief -- DIARY OF A SNOW SHOVELER -- author unknown

December 8 - 6:00 PM

It started to snow. The first snow of the season and the wife and I took our cocktails and sat for hours by the window watching the huge soft flakes drift down from heaven. It looked like a Grandma Moses Print. So romantic we felt like newlyweds again. I love snow!

December 9

We woke to a beautiful blanket of crystal white snow covering every inch of the landscape. What a fantastic sight! Can there be a more lovely place in the whole world? Moving here was the best idea I've ever had! Shovelled for the first time in years and felt like a boy again. I did both our driveway and the sidewalks. This afternoon the snowplough came along and covered up the sidewalks and closed in the driveway, so I got to shovel again. What a perfect life!



December 12

The sun has melted all our lovely snow. Such a disappointment! My neighbour tells me not to worry- we'll definitely have a white Christmas. No snow on Christmas would be awful! Bob says we'll have so much snow by the end of winter, that I'll never want to see snow again. I don't think that's possible. Bob is such a nice man, I'm glad he's our neighbour.

December 14

Snow, lovely snow! 8 inches last night. The temperature dropped to -20. The cold makes everything sparkle so. The wind took my breath away, but I warmed up by shovelling the driveway and sidewalks. This is the life! The snowplough came back this afternoon and buried everything again. I didn't realize I would have to do quite this much shovelling, but I'll certainly get back in shape this way. I wish I wouldn't huff and puff so.

December 15

20 inches forecast. Sold my van and bought a 4x4 Blazer. Bought snow tires for the wife's car and 2 extra shovels. Stocked the freezer. The wife wants a wood stove in case the electricity goes out. I think that's silly. We aren't in Alaska, after all.

December 16

Ice storm this morning. Fell on my ass on the ice in the driveway putting down salt. Hurt like hell. The wife laughed for an hour, which I think was very cruel.

December 17

Still way below freezing. Roads are too icy to go anywhere. Electricity was off for 5 hours. I had to pile the blankets on to stay warm. Nothing to do but stare at the wife and try not to irritate her. Guess I should've bought a wood stove, but won't admit it to her. God I hate it when she's right. I can't believe I'm freezing to death in my own living room.

December 20

Electricity's back on, but had another 14 inches of the damn stuff last night. More shovelling! Took all day. The damn snowplough came by twice. Tried to find a neighbour kid to shovel, but they said they're too busy playing hockey. I think they're lying. Called the only hardware store around to see about buying a snow blower and they're out. Might have another shipment in March. I think they're lying. Bob says I have to shovel or the city will have it done and bill me. I think he's lying.

December 22

Bob was right about a white Christmas because 13 more inches of the white shit fell today, and it's so cold, it probably won't melt till August. Took me 45 minutes to get all dressed up to go out to shovel and then I had to piss. By the time I got undressed, pissed and dressed again, I was too tired to shovel. Tried to hire Bob who has a plough on his truck for the rest of the winter, but he says he's too busy. I think the asshole is lying.

December 23

Only 2 inches of snow today. And it warmed up to 0. The wife wanted me to decorate the front of the house this morning. What is she, nuts?!! Why didn't she tell me to do that a month ago? She says she did but I think she's lying.

December 24

6 inches - Snow packed so hard by snowplough, I broke the shovel. Thought I was having a heart attack. If I ever catch the son of a bitch who drives that snow plough, I'll drag him through the snow by his balls and beat him to death with my broken shovel. I know he hides around the corner and waits for me to finish shovelling and then he comes down the street at a 100 miles an hour and throws snow all over where I've just been! Tonight the wife wanted me to sing Christmas carols with her and open our presents, but I was too busy watching for the damn snowplough.

December 25

Merry f---ing Christmas! 20 more inches of the damn slop tonight - Snowed in. The idea of shovelling makes my blood boil. God, I hate the snow! Then the snowplough driver came by asking for a donation and I hit him over the head with my shovel. The wife says I have a bad attitude. I think she's a fricking idiot. If I have to watch "It's A Wonderful Life" one more time, I'm going to stuff her into the microwave.

December 26

Still snowed in. Why the hell did I ever move here? It was all HER idea. She's really getting on my nerves.

December 27

Temperature dropped to -30 and the pipes froze; plumber came after 14 hours of waiting for him, he only charged me $1,400 to replace all my pipes.

December 28

Warmed up to above -20. Still snowed in. The BITCH is driving me crazy!!!

December 29

10 more inches. Bob says I have to shovel the roof or it could cave in. That's the silliest thing I ever heard. How dumb does he think I am?

December 30

Roof caved in. I beat up the snow plough driver, and now he is suing me for a million dollars, not only the beating I gave him, but also for trying to shove the broken snow shovel up his ass. The wife went home to her mother. Nine more inches predicted.

December 31

I set fire to what's left of the house. No more shovelling.

January 8

Feel so good. I just love those little white pills they keep giving me. Why am I tied to the bed?

Homelessness: A Sad Necessity? *Part One*

From Brian Mason

The world holds enough to satisfy everyone's need,
but not everyone's greed.
Mahatma Gandhi

The homeless of Greater Victoria, estimated to number 1,000, constitute merely 0.3 per cent of our population. Since a small, inconsequential gasoline tax would provide each of them with a modest basic income, lack of funding cannot be the barrier to eliminating this shame. What does it say about a prosperous, medium-sized Canadian city when it cannot find a way to properly house so small a number of people in need? It says we are accepting of the situation, despite any rhetoric or staggered gestures to the contrary. I will try to explain why this is so.

It's easy neither to recognize nor find solutions to homelessness for one simple reason: our economic system doesn't see it as a problem. In the same way that classical economic theory accepts a certain natural level of unemployment (below which the inflation rate begins to accelerate), our capitalist market system produces a certain natural level of poverty and homelessness. It's a ruthlessly competitive system where intrusive efforts to spread out wealth more evenly are regarded as impediments to its optimal functioning.

The homeless are losers in a system that, by definition (and, indeed, by ideology), cannot and will not distribute wealth evenly. It's a huge natural unfairness. Yet we all buy into this system, live by it and benefit to varying degrees from the wealth it generates. The system, by nature, creates the poor as surely as it creates the rich, and every class in between. That's how it all works. Morally speaking, we have come to accept this arrangement.

In the great sweep of history, the poor, as a distinct class in society, began to emerge with the development of agriculture, as humankind abandoned its egalitarian gatherer-hunter stage of existence. Though subsistence farming then prevailed for thousands of years, ever so slowly agricultural surplus became variously, if unreliably, possible.

Food surpluses enabled the founding and growth of cities (later nations), peopled with those who were able to live apart from (but off the labours of) subsistence farming: the clergy, military, and nobility; the guild members and merchants; the propertied classes and landlords. Inequities of wealth grew in tandem, engendering rigid class systems. Nevertheless, until the late 18th century, the vast majority of our forebears were living a dirt-poor rural existence always one crop failure away from starvation.

Enter the industrial revolution, the rise of market capitalism and we speed forward to our postmodern times where but a tiny percentage of the population produce food for a growing mass of urban dwellers. Thus, it is in cities where poverty has settled, driven there from the fields of our agricultural past.

Homelessness in Canada – as a distinct form of poverty – last went beyond its acceptable "natural" level during the depression era of the 1930s, a time when the economy suffered not so much from insufficient production, as insufficient demand. Unemployment soared, consumer demand fell, the economy faltered – and the homeless multiplied. Contrast this situation with Victoria today where the number of homeless is increasing during a time of unprecedented wealth, low unemployment, and obscenely high demand for consumer goods. How can this be happening?

A defining characteristic of our age – driven by the raging, globalized capitalist market system – is the enormous and growing gap between the well off and the poor, not only within a country like Canada but also between the rich and poor nations themselves and, especially, between the wealthy and the abjectly poor of the poor nations. There is now enormous material wealth on Earth; it is just as enormously maldistributed. The world's ten richest people in 2002 possessed a combined wealth of US$266 billion, five times the annual flow of aid from rich nations to poor ones (source: Manifesto for a New World Order, George Monbiot).

Our problem (leaving aside the ruinous state of the planet) is not one of wealth creation (world GDP, by one measure, is estimated at US$60 trillion, enough, were it to be evenly distributed, to give everyone on Earth an annual income of nearly US$10,000); it is one of wealth distribution and allocation (source: www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html).

Most people in Greater Victoria, as in the rest of Canada, have too much, too much money and too much stuff. A few have too little, fewer still have almost nothing. Higher levels of taxation (and they ought to be higher for the well off) coupled with improvements in government transfer and entitlement programs would easily effect a fully equitable allocation of wealth. But what politician now wants to run on a platform of increasing taxes and sharing wealth?

We have, at every level, abandoned any idea that we are all in this world together, that it's not a flat-out competition to see who garners the most money and goods. Obscene levels of wealth held in private hands at the top of the social pyramid simply do not trickle, let alone flow, downward and outward to the majority of the population. On the contrary, wealth, once acquired, is jealously guarded.

The corporatist, moneyed elite has shown itself comfortable with a certain level of poverty and homelessness. Relying on corporations to resolve this inequity is like asking a casino operator to reimburse the losing gamblers. At best, corporations sponsor sporadic, high-profile (tax-deductible) acts of charity like food-bank drives at Christmas – the so-called "enlightened self-interest" school of (barely) ethics. Social justice is not the purview of free-market capitalism.

Although we humans may be social, even ethical, animals, our natural socialistic tendencies don't emerge when we are required to live in big cities far removed from our gatherer-hunter roots. Against the backdrop of an imposed, artificial, relentlessly competitive economic system, our instincts falter. We go with what we are faced with; we grab what we can, at the expense of others and the planet. But the grabbing is uneven; we are not equally endowed with the required skills and attitudes to "succeed" in the capitalist market system. Unless governments intervene – or until the people rise up – nothing will transform the social order.

Submitted by Brian Mason, a writer, philosopher and activist living in James Bay.

Victoria Committee to End All Homelessness

by Don Startin

During December and January the Ad Hoc Committee to End Homelessness met every Wednesday evening to come up with and implement ways to help the homeless.

Just before the last Council meeting of the year on Thursday, Dec 14th we held a New Orleans style funeral walk led by well known trumpet player Alfons Fear. Wearing black arm bands, we carried coffins we had made from Our Place to City Hall where we ate a homeless style cold sandwich supper on the doorstep until the doors opened and we were able to take the coffins into the Council chamber. After sitting through a long and gruelling meeting Philippe Lucas, Momma Bear, Irene Pollack, Rose Henry and Davyn Ganja made presentations designed to keep up the pressure on council to improve the situation for homeless people.

On January 3rd we altered our name to The Victoria Committee to End All Homelessness. Times Colonist readers will have seen the picture of the year 2006 in the TC for December 31st showing Craig Ballantyne getting tear gassed.

We will be meeting every Wednesday, rain or shine, at Dreamspace - 751 Discovery Street. Come at 6:40 for 7:00 pm to help set up. All are welcome. The coffee pot is on. Once again, we are trying. Victorians, come and put your shoulder to the wheel.

The Committee has endorsed and will be actively taking part in the national Homeless Nation Marathon on February 20th from sunrise to sunset - learn more at www.ckut.ca/homeless.html.

Walk for the Homeless Dead

Submitted by Lisa Helps

On Thursday December 14th homeless residents of Victoria and their allies held a funeral procession from Our Place on Johnson Street to the Council Chambers at City Hall. Led by a bugle player followed by one large black coffin and four smaller white ones, the march was held to mark the deaths of those who have died on the streets of Canadian cities.

Anti-poverty activist Rose Henry had 'decorated' the coffins with the names of the dead. "The names on these coffins," she said, "these are people who have walked through these doors (of Our Place)."

Organized by the Ad Hoc Committee to End Homelessness, the march was originally motivated by information that four people had died on the streets of Victoria during the most recent cold snap in late November. Although these specific deaths could not be confirmed, the group decided to go ahead with the Walk for the Dead anyway in order to draw Council's attention to the need for emergency shelter beds for the rest of the winter.

"The most important thing we can do right now," said Ad Hoc Committee member Philippe Lucas of the Vancouver Island Compassion Society, "is to keep people alive through this winter."

The Ad Hoc Committee to End Homelessness began meeting earlier this fall and was galvanized on October 22nd – National Housing Day – when members acted as the "outer circle" for Craig Ballantyne who squatted the Janion Building at 1614 Store Street to protest the lack of affordable housing in Victoria. Since then, the Committee has met every Wednesday and has become a regular force in Thursday's City Council meetings.

After placing the coffins at the doors of City Hall, the marchers shared a meal and waited for the council meeting to begin. When he addressed Council, Lucas referred to the City's "Extreme Weather Protocol" adopted in December 2005, which sees a temporary increase in what are called 'stage two' shelter spaces when extreme weather conditions are forecasted and all the regular beds are full. Speaking on behalf of the Ad Hoc Committee, he requested that the City lobby BC Housing in order to guarantee funding so that a minimum of stage two shelter spaces are available seven days a week starting January 1st and running until at least March 1st of every year. Second, Lucas demanded that if BC Housing in unwilling to provide financial support, the city cover associated costs using its Affordable Housing Trust Fund, thereby guaranteeing extra shelter spaces for the rest of this winter. Either way available shelter spaces would be increased from 200 to about 260 for the next few months. "It's just a band-aid solution to a very complex problem," he said, "but sometimes a band-aid stops the bleeding long enough to save the patient."

The December 14th action by the Ad Hoc Committee to End Homelessness followed closely on the heels of NDP Leader Jack Layton's address in Parliament on December 7th. Layton asked the Conservative government to declare a national state of emergency.

"The rising number of homeless people on the streets of this country is a disgrace and we need federal action now to establish emergency shelters and put money into essential services to keep people safe this winter," he said.

Street Muzings

editor's note: One day I did a message receive, from Nancy - and a poem conceived. She and a friend, at a council meeting found the night's discussion went round and round. Much talk of expanded economic growth, for unaffordable housing and alcohol both. They listened carefully, waiting their turn, they heard a poem, and they did learn of Carla, Victoria's poet laureate. Their story's here, not intricate, but thoughtful and offering up some hope - for awakenings and new ways to cope.

Nancy's Story:

My girlfriend and I attended the last meeting of the Mayor and Town Council before the XMS break, to see what kind of actions were being taken on behalf of the Homeless in Victoria.

We were about 10 or 11 on a long list ... Condos and liquors stores and more condos and building variance etc. We waited as one of the councillors asked if the Homeless could speak first, since some were depending on shelter beds that evening. This was followed by a resounding NO from each and every one of them except the woman asking for it ... and then there was a Poem read .... how very nice and Victorian, don't you think?

It was a cute, fluffy kind of poem, about snow and how nice and pretty and fun it is. It was read aloud.... a very nice way to start off a meeting.

I thought that since the Mayor and Council like Poems, I would rewrite a few of the words to see that snowfall in a different way, from the point of view of a homeless person.

Nancy Powell, Victoria BC

Carla's Response:

Dear Janine -- I had written Nancy a note a few weeks back, saying that I thought her poem brought some realism to my poem's musings on snow in Victoria.

I think her "re-visioning" of my poem is full of honesty, and does a great job of bridging the knowledge gap between those who have warmth from the cold and those who do not. For me, her version of "Come Winter" was a wake-up.

I hope it serves the same purpose for others who have the everyday luxury of shelter from the winter cold.

Carla Funk - www.carlafunk.com

Come Winter

a poem in honour of Victoria's first snowfall of the winter, December 2006

In this island city, snow comes
like an unexpected guest, the kind
you only hear from in holiday cards
and phone calls from the north, but now
out of nowhere, here he is on your front step
with a bottle of chardonnay in one hand,
and a fruitcake in the other:
you don't know whether to open the door
or draw the curtains and hide.

Outside, the moon's a blur,
as if every star in the cosmos
has come loose from its moorings,
galaxies shaken out and falling.
Night gives up its darkness
to a pale blue glow. You sleep
in a world covered over by light.

Morning, you look out your window
and realize this is no dream.
Across the road, a snowman stares
back at you with wet black eyes
and stones pressed into a half-smile.
With thin stick arms outstretched,
he could be a messenger sent
from some mysterious republic
to welcome you into this
monochrome land.

Down your front walk, you shovel
a way out, a way back to the familiar,
the greener world of rain and wind
and flying cherry blossoms.
In his own yard, your next-door neighbour
clears a path. Beneath his heavy coat and scarf,
and that toque pulled down to warm his ears,
he could be anyone – stranger, imposter,
undercover alien, like this world
you find yourself alive in,
this white planet, this winter city.
Hello, you call across the new quiet. Hello.

Carla Funk

Cold Winter

A poem in honor of the homeless of Victoria on the first snow fall of the winter, December 2006.

In this island city, snow comes
like an unwelcome guest, the kind
you have nightmares about
and wish would just stop, but now
out of nowhere, there he is right there
dripping wet, as cold as you can get
without dying, angry, hungry O God
you wish you could just close the door
or draw the curtains and hide.

Outside, everything is a blur,
as if every star in the cosmos
has come loose from its moorings,
and is coming straight at you.
You are shaking and falling
Never give up in the darkness,
you pale, blue, cold. You sleep
in the doorway, by the trash.

Morning, too cold to move O how
I wish this was a dream.
Across the road, a dog stares
back at you with wet, black eyes
and his lips pressed into a half-smile.
With thin arms outstretched,
he could be a messenger sent
from some mysterious republic
to welcome you into this
homeless homeland.

Down, no luck, you lost
a way out, a way back, to family
the greener world, no rain or wind
no killing cold, waiting.
You have no yard, no next door neighbor
no clear path. Beneath your heavy coat and
scarf and that toque pulled down to warm your
ears you could be anyone- stranger, mother
brother, sister, father, alien, like this world you
find yourself alive in, this White Planet, this cold
city. Hello? you scream across the empty quiet.
HELLO???

By Nancy Powell, with apologies to Carla Funk

Why

I hear the footsteps of winter
crunch,crunch crunch oh January
of white and dark covered over
to reveal
green covered in white
birds starving
red berries on holly tree
gone
birdseed gobbled up by the invasive
squirrels
big hoot owl arrives Jan l to wish a
happy New year.
Stellar Blue Jay flew in
over moss covered tree.
Bells of winter ring out
where are we going
where are we going
in the turning time
are we thriving
towards an understanding
of why?

Penelope

The Placid Panda

The placid panda
population
is rising
prodded to mate
eat one type bamboo
need more space
nothing's
too late
at the insistence
of our innate nature
co-existence
resisting resistance

© Paul Burnside

A pencil drawing by a British relative, Maggie Kitching, of "the Hutongs (where the poor people live) which are being bulldozed down mile by mile to make way for the olympic village Beijing2008." www.maggiekitching.com

charity

i was walking by the strip
as the afternoon shift
did its best street shuffle
dancing between the pillars of flesh
and money
tugging up a theory
about the modern crime of mercy
making it home
i sucked on poison
to ensure my doom
and erase the visions
drunken on the living room floor
i counted
missplaced calling cards
and lovers gone
lost forever
never pressed
as close in
as this bottle that holds me now
moral degradation is all
that keeps me from launching
over the railing
head heavy-side down
full of thoughts on forgiveness
and trespasses
just before
the concrete
can make
the final
impression.

j. fisher

editor's note: a collection of j. fisher's poetry, 'bulletin from the low light,' is available at Dark Horse Books - 623 Johnson St. in Victoria. j's writings can also be found at www.frontenachouse.com

Left Coast Happenings

Street Newz offers no guarantee that this info is accurate, or that the events will actually occur. Full events list published weekly at relativenewz.ca.

Mondays	**Movie Monday** - 6:30 pm, Eric Martin Pavilion (1900 block Fort St. by donation 595-FLIC or www.islandnet.com/mm
Alt Mondays	**Victoria Peace Coalition** - 7:30 pm, dolcla@islandnet.com
Tuesdays	**Voice of Palestine** - 8-9 pm (PST) on 102.7FM. Listen live at http://www.coopradio.org/listen, archives in Audio Clips.
Tuesdays	**Vic Bluegrass Assoc Jams** 1620 Fernwood, Orange Hall, 7:30 pm 472-6483 free for listeners, $2 for players - all levels
Tuesdays	**Students Against War Club Meetings** - UVic. 2:30, SUB basement rm B028. Info: sawuvic@yahoo.ca
Tuesdays	**Hand Drumming** Drop-in, $10. Beg: 7-8 pm, Adv: 8:15-9:15 pm 521 Superior Info 386-1054 Drums provided.
2nd Tuesdays	**Green Drinks** - Queen Mother Waterside Cafe, 407 Swift St 5-7 pm. Info: www.qmwaterside.ca or www.greendrinks.org
Wednesdays	**Falun Gong** faluninfo.net. Fernwood Community Centre, 1240 Gladstone 5-7 p.m. Info: (250)995-1494 free
Wednesdays	**Peace Vigils @ the Legislature,** noon - 1 pm - Peace Ambassadors greet int'l visitors! Imagine: War Never Again 477-1944
Wednesdays	**Recreational Drum Circle -** 7pm, Dwntwn Community Act Ctr, 755 Pandora Free, Drums provided, all levels. 383-0076
Wednesdays	**SOLID (Society of Living Intravenous Drugusers)** except welfare day, 7-9 pm, 1947 Cook St. $3 bus fare reimbursed
Wednesdays	**Integrative Health Forum**: **INFORM** yourself about health, 7-8pm, Free, 229, 560 Johnson-Market Square www.pacificrimcollege.ca
Wednesdays	**Victoria Committee to End All Homelessness** 7-9 pm, Dreamspace - 751 Discovery St. victoria@communitysolidarity.org
2nd Thursdays	**South Island Health Coalition meetings** 2 pm, BCGEU Building, 2994 Douglas St., 381-0033
Fridays	**Parents of Apprehended Children support group,** 1-3 pm, Blanshard Community Ctr 384-6554 # 126, colleenmasur@hotmail.com
Fridays	**Coffeehouse discussion group** 7:30 pm JJ's coffeehouse in Brentwood Bay 7:30 pm Info: sue_stroud@hotmail.com
Fourth Fridays	**Café Simpatico, Activist coffeehouse**, 1923 Fernwood. Doors at 7 pm. casc@telus.net , 598-7690, communitypipe.org
Last Fridays	**Propel Yourself!** Victoria Critical Mass Bike Rides - Centennial Square, 5 pm. bring bike, board, helmet, lights, bliss.
Sat Mornings	**Sikh meditation** -all welcome 6-7 am, Gurdwara Singh Sabha Society (470 Cecelia Rd) Info: jindi@hotmail.com
Saturdays	**Neighbourhood Plastic Recycling** - soft & hard plastics, and styrofoam 382-4604, www.pacificmobiledepots.com
Saturdays	**Tour Merve Wilkinson's Wildwood Forest**, Ladysmith Info: Jay, 250-245-5540, www.ecoforestry.ca/WildwoodMap.htm
4th Saturdays	**Soft Plastic Recycling**-Carnarvon Pk,Oak Bay,930-1230 pm,370-7736,oakgreen@telus.net,www.pacificmobiledepots.com
Sat & Sun	**Falun Gong** faluninfo.net 10-noon, Beacon Hill Pk, across from petting zoo, all winter. 250-995-1494 free
Alt. Sundays	**Sierra Club Nature Outings** - Call Nikko for more details at 386-5255 x241, www.sierraclub.ca/bc
Sundays	**Victoria Folk Music Society** 7:30pm, Norway House, 1110 Hillside www.pacificcoast.net/~vfms or 413-3213, 24 hrs
Sundays	**ICA Immigrant Youth Group (12-18)** 1-3 pm, 930 Balmoral St (@ Quadra) Info: 388-4728 # 112, youth@icavictoria.org
Sundays	**Join Victoria's Food Not Bomb**s and prepare, cook, and/or clean-up on Sundays (see pg 7) 383-5144 extension 1940
4th Sundays	**Council of Canadians Coffee Nights** 6:30-8:30 pm, Black Stilt Café, 103-1633 Hillside Ave. Info: 220-5355
Monthly	**Faith in Action** -a multi-faith coalition working to put more heart into BC's income assistance. www.bcfaithinaction.ca
Monthly	**Vancouver Island Vegetarian Associaton (VIVA) Potlucks** www.islandveg.com
All month	**CRD Parks outings and explorations** for all ages. 478-3344 www.crd.bc.ca/parks/brochure2.htm
Ongoing	**Auditions for Spilt Milk Improv Comedy Troupe** 479-3374, spiltmilk@centralmail.com, www.spiltmilkcomedy.com
Thurs Jan 25th	**Growing The Great Turning** - for social transformation, 4:30-8:30, FCA (1923 Fernwood) Info: prana4@shaw.ca
Thurs Jan 25th	**Venezuela Presidential Elections Report** - slideshow w/delegates 7:30, UVic David Strong C103 885-2210
Fri Jan 26th	**Law, Housing, Sex Work, Cops & Research** w/Pivot Legal Lawyer David Eby 12:30-2:20, UVic Cornett B107, Free 472-4386, www.vipirg.ca
Sat Jan 27th	**Safer Sex Trade @ Movie Monday** & discussion w/ director & producer, 7pm, EMP-1900 block Fort, donation Info: 595-FLIC
Sun Jan 28th	**WorldPlay(staged readings)-"Shine, My Dear Planet Earth"** -8 pm, Belfry, 1291 Gladstone, donation, www.puentetheatre.ca, 592-4367
Tues Jan 30th	**UVic Common Energy Lecture Series- Climate, Energy and Society** 7:30-9 pm, UVic Elliott Bldg Rm 168 www.commonenergy.org
Wed Jan 31st	**Public Mtg: CRD's Urban Sprawl & Development Boom** 7 pm, Juan de Fuca Library, 1759 Island Hwy, Colwood. Info: 388-3847
Thurs Feb 1st	**Waking up the West Coast: Healers & Visionaries** - profits with integrity. Garry Oak Rm, 1330 Thurlow, 7-9 pm $5/10
Fri Feb 2nd	**2nd Annual UVic Animal Law Conference** - 9-4pm, UVic Fraser Bldg 157, donation. Info: www.law.uvic.ca/saldf
Sun Feb 4th	**WorldPlay (staged readings) - "Boss Kanduz's Apartment Building" & "War & Peace"** - see listing Jan 28th
Sun Feb 4th	**Rethinking the Benefits of Cruise Tourism** - James Bay Community School Ctr, 140 Oswego, Café Rm, 7 pm. free, info 721-8629
Sun Feb 4th	**Sacred Path Workshop - the Yoga of Sound & Chant** 1-4 pm, UVic Interfaith Chapel, $20/15 www.sacredworldsong.com, 721-8338
Mon Feb 5th	**Common Energy Conference: Finding Common Ground** 1-9 pm, Michele Pujol Rm, UVic SUB www.commonenergy.org
Feb 6-9th	**Homeless Needs Survey @ Street Link, Sally Ann, other service agencies.** Info: www.Coolaid.org, 383-1977, 383-6166
Wed Feb 7th	**National Student Day of Action - Reduce Student Debt!** 12 pm, Legislature. Food, Music, Info dayofactionvictoria.blogspot.com
Thurs Feb 8th	**Healing Heartways Training** - with Joseph Martin, @ Quantum Healing Ctr 691 Burnside $20 474-4176, www.sourceco-creations.com
Feb 8-10th	**Satsang with Nirmala** Info: 250-370-1636 or www.endless-satsang.com
Feb 8-Apr 26th	**Playing with a Language Deeper than Words** - mindfulness, voice, dance, mask, poetics and story-telling - for women 4-6:30 pm Thursdays $100 or $15 drop in (arrange prior) Info: www.playbacknet.org or 380-0036
Mar 9-11th	**Open Mind Wise Heart, Contemplative Practice in Personal & Prof. Life** www.royalroads.ca/continuing-studies 391-2600, ext. 4801
Sun Feb 11th	**3rd Annual Valentine's Celebration for the Earth** 1-3 pm, Moss Rock Park Fairfield, bring drums & rattles www.islandnet.com/~msw
Sun Feb 11th	**WorldPlay (staged readings of plays from around the world) - "The Victim"** -8 pm, Belfry, 1291 Gladstone, donation, 592-4367
Tues Feb 13th	**Sacred Circle Dance into Spring** - Celebrate changing seasons! 7-9 pm, Friends' Mtg House, 1831 Fern St., donation. 592-2848
Thurs Feb 15th	**Another World is Possible** - Benefit - What Works to Prevent Violence, Terror, and War 7-9:30 pm, donation, UVic David Lam, 479 9189
Feb 23 & 24th	**Ethical Purchasing Forum** w/ co-ops, biz, activists, faith grps, academics, indigenous orgs, farmers, labour, politicians www.ethicalpurchasing.bcics.org
Mon Feb 26th	**Crisis of Homelessness - Nanaimo** - Panel Discussion, 7 pm, St. Andrew's, 4236 Departure Bay Rd. 250-758-3354 jbhedges@telus.net
Mon Feb 26th	**Fernwood Community Association Safety Committee Public Mtg** 1023 Fernwood, 7:30 pm, 384-7441 or www.fernwoodvic.ca
Tues, Apr 17th	**Youbou Timberless Society Class Action** suit goes to the BC Supreme Court. Info: www.savebcjobs.com or (250) 746-8684
Apr 26-27th	**Grassroots Academy: to Ensure Effective Participation & Voices of Grassroots Women in Int'l Policy** - NYC, www.lesecun.org

Some Vancouver Resources:

* Pivot Legal Society: www.pivotlegal.org
* Anti-Poverty Committee: apc.resist.ca
* Downtown Eastside Residents Association: www.dera.bc.ca
* Vancouver's Missing Women: www.missingpeople.net
* CKUT Radio: Documentary. Vancouver's Downtown Eastside: www.radio4all.net/proginfo.php?id=9110

A Photo Essay: Vancouver's Downtown Eastside
December 2006 by Sawsan Kalache & Stefan Christoff

* http://gallery.cmaq.net/downtowneast
* http://gallery.cmaq.net/downtownbw

Ladies Van Island Tour
4 weeks - $600 - in a 24' Class C RV
Anywhere we want to camp.
Call Anna - 705-475-6292

Beacon Community Services

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Offering gently used clothing, jewellery,housewares, furniture, and much more at the lowest prices in the Victoria area!!!!

Enjoy volunteering? Call Trish at 479-3306

www.beaconcs.ca

A Winning Proposition for Clothes & Goods Redistribution

Hi my name is Rob Mason, and I am offering what I hope will be a service too good to be refused. This service is motivated by a desire to contribute and provides a Win-Win-Win situation.

If you find yourself with drawers and closets full of clothing, blankets, towels (in reasonably good repair), that you no longer wear/use, I would be happy to drop by and pick up these items thereby freeing up your living space. (Win 1)

There is no charge for the service, simply call me @ 744-2865 to arrange a pickup time and that's all there is to it. (Win 2)

I am gathering these items to donate to "OUR PLACE" where they will be once again be freely distributed to those in need. (Win 3).

Oh I stand corrected, through being able to act as the conduit by which your generosity finds its way to worthy recipients, I guess I win too!

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Jim Butler and Larry Gagnon accept requests for and contributions of used computer components. They'll rebuild and redistribute internet capable computers.

Free indefinite loan to low or no income people.

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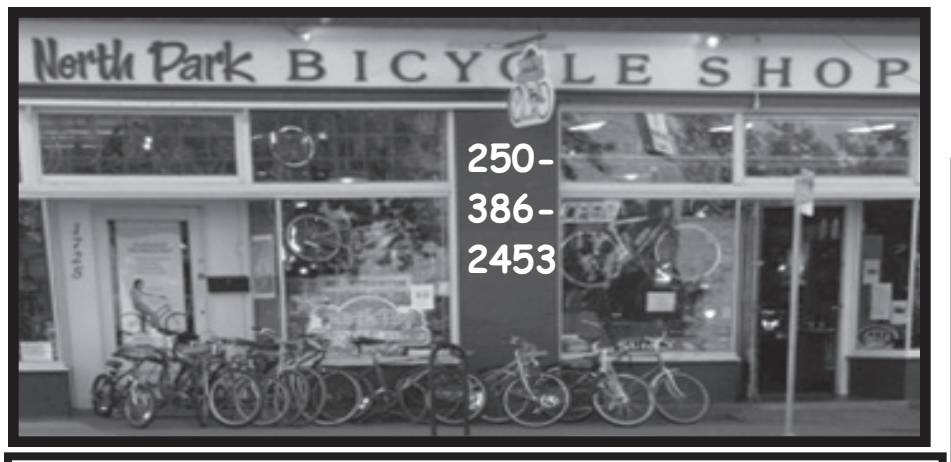
#12 Centennial Square.
Tuesday to Friday 1pm to 5pm.
Phone: (250) 995-0265
www.victoriacarshare.ca



Whirled Arts

Local Artists / World-Wide Treasures

10 am - 6 pm M-Sun
#105 - 3 Fantan Alley
250-386-2787
whirledarts@hotmail.com

Denise Savoie

Member of Parliament for Victoria

970 Blanshard Street
363-3600
www.denisesavoie.ca

A Voice for Victoria in Ottawa

Victoria Street Newz

February circ: 1800

Serving Our Community

1020 Hillside Avenue
Phone: 250 360 2023
rob.fleming.mla@leg.bc.ca

Rob Fleming, MLA
Victoria - Hillside

the good planet co.™

1005 Broad St,
between Broughton and Fort

(250) 477-0146
info@goodplanet.com

Tony's Trailers

Bicycle trailers for every person and purpose

766 Handy Road, Mill Bay (250) 743-9915
tonyhoar@shaw.ca, tonystrailers.com

Contact Tony to learn how you can help provide a trailer for a homeless person !

Need Legal Assistance??

Access Justice - Volunteer lawyers offer advice on civil matters:
Wednesdays 2-4 pm, 386-8521 and Thursdays noon-2 pm, 388-4728.

Legal Services Society - If you're low income and can't afford a lawyer.
200 – 747 Fort Street Victoria, BC V8W 3E9
(250) 388-4516, www.lss.bc.ca -- Mon to Fri - 9:00 am to 12:30 pm

UVic's Law Centre - Free legal representation if you qualify for legal assistance.
Interviews: Mon - Fri: 9:30 am - noon; 1:15 pm - 3:30 pm
Call for Appt: 385-1221 Info: thelawcentre.ca

Central America Support Committee

CASC
Join us first Wednesday of every month;
7:30 PM upstairs at 1923 Fernwood Road
Email: casc@telus.net
Phone: 598-7690
Web: http://casc.communitypipe.org/

Café Simpatico
Victoria's Activist Coffeehouse
598-7690 • 1923 Fernwood Road

Fair trade organic coffee available by the cup or pound

Street Newz Vendors - check relativenewz.ca for locations

Ken

Debbie

John

Marlene

Berni

photo not available

Rose

John

Rick

Ted & Bok

Join us! - we sometimes meet @ Solstice Café Fridays, 10 - noon.

Wanna sell this paper? Talk to John @ his Douglas/ Fort St. office.

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Bean Counting

Operating Revenue	Nov	Dec	Jan
Coordinator's Revenue			
Paper Sales (from vendors)	535.00	500.00	550.00
Donations	100.00	295.00	260.00
Subscriptions	0.00	105.00	70.00
Salary from B & R	650.00	650.00	650.00
** Belfry Bottles	53.00	0.00	0.00
Pennies from Panhandlers	0.00	37.65	0.00
Total Coordinator's Revenue	1338.00	1587.65	1530.00
B&R Revenue (deposited)			
Donations	45.00	340.00	180.00
Subscriptions	75.00	105.00	152.00
Total B&R Rev. (deposited)	120.00	445.00	332.00
Total Operating Revenue	1338.00	1587.65	1530.00
Operating Expenses			
Coordinator's Expenses			
Paper & Printing Costs	588.74	624.90	748.16
Office expenses	26.00	16.00	22.00
Misc. (postage, fees, etc.)	58.00	92.89	68.54
Community reciprocity	150.00	85.00	160.00
Total Coordinator's Expenses	822.74	818.79	998.70
B & R Expenses			
Bus Tickets (2 for 1)	35.00	35.00	35.00
fm City of Vic Grant	100.00	100.00	100.00
fm Vancity Grant	450.00	450.00	450.00
fm KAIROS Grant	50.00	50.00	50.00
fm PSAC Grant	50.00	50.00	50.00
sub ttl B&R Expenses	685.00	685.00	685.00
Total Operating Expenses	1507.74	1503.79	1683.70
Ttl Coord Rev minus Expenses (- is out of pocket, + is salary)	-169.74	83.86	-153.70

** For the past year the Belfry Theatre has kindly allowed Street Newz the opportunity to return its collected bottles to the recycling depot. Street Newz has now extended that opportunity to local binners who use Tony's Trailers, specifically designed for the purpose. If you'd like a bottle pickup, contact Janine at 383-5144 ext 0137, or streetnewz@islandnet.com.

A Great Big Thank You !!

New or renewed subscribers: Andrée Scott, Jane Bramadat (from Ruth Miller), Marya Nijland, Andrew Mulcahy, Arnold Ranneris, Mary-Wynne Ashford, Legal Services Society

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And anyone else I may have missed - Thanks!! We couldn't do it without you!!

Thanks to these Generous Supporters!!

THE CITY OF VICTORIA

Vancity

KAIROS

PSAC AFPC workingforcanadians.ca

thanks for the work you are doing
it's people like you
that make it worthwhile (or able)
for me to go on

anonymous

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relativenewz.ca, 250-383-6166 ext 0137

Thanks for your support!!